

SN. 09/615,243

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. CANO:009

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 remain pending in this application for which applicant seeks reconsideration.

Amendment

Claims 1-30 have been amended to improve their form and clarity. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 10-12, 15, and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Ellard (USP 5,991,758). Claims 2, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, and 20-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Ellard in view of Fisher (USP 5,563,997). Applicant traverses these rejections because these references do not disclose or teach the assigning feature set forth in independent claims 1, 8, and 15.

Independent claims 1, 8, and 15 each call for displaying a list having records concerning files of documents, and assigning identifiers to records selected from the list, with the identifiers having respective priorities. This enables a plurality of documents provided with identifiers having respective priorities to be collectively processed according to the order of priority.

The examiner alleges that Ellard's entity identifiers correspond to the priority identifiers. Applicant disagrees. Ellard discloses a system/method for identifying data records from one or more databases that contain information about the same entity, and associating those data records together for easier access for that entity. Ellard provides a master entity index (MEI) 32 that processes, updates, and stores data records of one or more entities from one or more information sources 34, 36, 38. Operators can send commands or queries to the MEI, which can operate with data records from one or more information sources. The data records in the MEI database are matched against each combination of attributes to generate a plurality of candidate data records. Once the group of candidates has been determined, the confidence level for each candidate can be calculated. The confidence level can be calculated based on a scoring routine, which can be historical data, such as a last address. See Column 15, lines 15-30.

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In sum, while Ellard discloses associating together data records containing information about the entity, it does not disclose or teach assigning identifiers having respective priorities to record selected from a list, and processing the selected records to which the identifiers are assigned based on the respective priorities of the identifiers. Ellard's entity identifiers and confidence level calculation features simply do not correspond to the claimed assigning feature set forth in claims 1, 8, and 15.

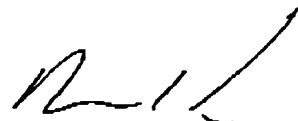
Fisher merely discloses sorting data records using indexes indicative of properties, such as document name and number. Fisher does not alleviate Ellard's shortcoming identified above. Accordingly, even if the combination were deemed proper, for argument's sake, it would not have taught the claimed invention.

#### Conclusion

Applicant submits that claims 1-30 patentably distinguish over the applied references and thus urges the examiner to issue an early Notice of Allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicant urges the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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